

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 9, please replace the paragraph beginning with "In accordance" with the following paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, the outsole 40 is made of a rigid material so as to provide support to the outsole 40 and includes an outer surface 42. The outsole 40 may have any number of shapes depending upon the type of shoe 10. For example, shoe 10 is a typical women's shoe and therefore includes a prominent heel 50. When shoe 10 has a heel, such as heel 50, the heel 50 may be formed as a separate member from the outsole 40 or the heel 50 may be integrally formed as part of the outsole 40. In the exemplary shoe 10, the heel 50 is a separate member which is coupled to the outsole 40 using known techniques. Preferably, an upper portion of the heel 50, in the form of a lip 51, extends around a heel portion of the exterior cover 24. This lip portion 51 is coupled to the adjacent heel portion of the exterior cover 24 using an adhesive or the like. A bottommost portion 53 of the heel 50 engages the ground or support surface and therefore may be formed of a suitable material for such wear. For example, the bottommost portion 53 may be formed of the same material as the other portions of the heel 50 or may be formed of a different material. The major portion of the heel 50 is preferably formed of a rigid material, such as a rigid plastic or wood. The bottommost portion 53 may be formed of this type of material or

may be in the form of a shaped rubber pad which is coupled to the other portions of the heel 50, as shown in Figs. 1-2.

Page 10, please replace the paragraph beginning with "In accordance" with the following paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, the outsole 40 also includes a shaped fabric member 60 which forms a part of the outsole 40 and has a predetermined shape. As best shown in Fig. 3, the shaped fabric member 60 includes a thin, flexible, fabric sheet material 62 and a backing layer 64.

b2 Preferably, the fabric sheet material 62 is formed of a non-woven fabric, such as polyester fibers mixed with cotton. Thus, the fabric sheet material 62 is not produced using a weaving process but rather is produced using other suitable techniques for forming a non-woven fabric. For example, the polyester fibers may be used to form a needle felt which is then impregnated with a material before being dried and pressed. It will be appreciated that the shaped fabric member 60 may have any number of shapes and sizes depending upon the shoe design and other parameters such as the amount of contact between the outsole 40 and the ground or support surface.

Page 11, please replace the paragraph beginning with "In the shoe" with the following paragraph:

In the shoe 10, the shaped fabric member 60 is disposed within the outsole 40 and more preferably is disposed within the ball portion 49 of the outsole 40. Preferably, the shaped fabric member 60 is integrally formed as part of the outsole 40 as will be described hereinafter. The bottommost portion 53 of the heel 50 is formed of a rubber or other suitable material. A gap 63 is formed between the fabric sheet material 62 and a surrounding edge 71 of the outer surface 42 of the outsole 40. As shown in the figures, the outer surface 42 of the outsole 40 surrounds the shaped fabric member 60. When the shaped fabric member 60 is disposed within the outsole 40, an outer face of the fabric sheet material 62 is preferably substantially planar to the surrounding outer surface 42 of the outsole 40 so that during use, the outsole 40 engages the ground in a relatively uniform manner.

Page 12, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The fabric" with the following paragraph:

The backing layer 64 is preferably formed of a shape-retaining material, for example, a rubber or plastic material. The backing layer 64 and the fabric sheet material 62 are integrally connected to one another by any number of techniques, including using a molding process as will be described in greater detail hereinafter. In addition, the surrounding outsole 40 and the backing layer 64 may

be formed of the same material or may be formed of different materials. In one exemplary embodiment, both are formed of a thermoplastic. In another embodiment, both are formed of a material that is referred to herein as a thermoplastic rubber.

Page 12, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The shaped fabric member" with the following paragraph:

The shaped fabric member 60 along with the surrounding outsole 40 provide the shoe 10 with a slip-resistance, shape-retaining partially fabric outsole 40. It is also contemplated that the outer surface 42 and/or the backing layer 64 may have a tread pattern formed thereon for a decorative purpose, a functional purpose, or both. For example, the surface 42 and the layer 64 can have a tread pattern, and in the case of the backing layer 64, the fabric sheet material 62 can closely conform to the pattern, e.g., follow the contour thereof.

Page 14, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The first and second" with the following paragraph:

The first and second dies 102, 104 are heated to a predetermined temperature which permits the molding process to proceed without damaging or

destroying the fabric sheet material 62. The predetermined temperature which is required for the molding process will depend upon a number of factors, including the type of thermoplastic resin used in the molding process. In one exemplary embodiment, the first and second dies 102, 104 are heated to a temperature of about 120° C when a thermoplastic rubber is used to form the backing layer 64. The first and second dies 102, 104 are pressed together with the fabric sheet material 62 being held in place against the first die 102 and then the thermoplastic rubber is injected into the first mold 100 after the thermoplastic rubber has been melted to a softened state by being exposed to a sufficient temperature (120° C).

Page 15, please replace the paragraph beginning with "Because the thermoplastic" with the following paragraph:

Because the thermoplastic rubber is in a softened state, it is able to flow throughout a cavity formed by the first and second dies 102, 104. The thermoplastic rubber forms the shape of the backing layer 64 once the thermoplastic rubber cools after a predetermined time period in which the temperature of the first mold 100 is reduced. The result is that the shaped fabric member 60 is formed and the thermoplastic rubber and the fabric sheet material 62 are bonded to one another by the heating process of the molding operation. Once the shaped fabric member 60 has sufficiently cooled down, the first and second

dies 102, 104 are opened and the shaped fabric member 60 is removed therefrom. Excess fabric sheet material 62 is cut off from the shaped fabric member 60 to provide for the shaped fabric member 60 shown in Fig. 11. As previously discussed, the shaped fabric member 60 includes the fabric sheet material 62 bonded to the backing layer 64.

Page 16, please replace the paragraph beginning with "In a second" with the following paragraph:

In a second molding operation, the shaped fabric member 60 is placed into a second mold 200, shown in Fig. 12. The second mold 200 includes a first die 202 and a second die 204. The first and second dies 202, 204 define a cavity which is generally in the shape of the outsole 40. It will be appreciated that the cavity may not necessarily define the entire heel structure 50 of the outsole 40 but will likely define the remaining portions, e.g., the shank 53 and the ball portion 49. The shaped fabric member 60 (Fig. 11) is inserted into the first mold 202 with the fabric sheet material 62 facing a bottom section 203 of the first die 202. Consequently, the backing layer 64 faces the second die 204 when the second die 204 is closed.

Page 16, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The first and

second" with the following paragraph:

The first and second dies 202, 204 are heated to a predetermined temperature and are closed with respect to one another. Once again, the predetermined temperature is a temperature at which the first and second dies 202, 204 will not damage the fabric sheet material 62 but will permit (1) the thermoplastic rubber forming the backing layer 64 to resoften and (2) permit a second thermoplastic rubber material to soften sufficiently so that it may be injected into the second mold 200. Preferably, the predetermined temperature of the second mold 200 is greater than the predetermined temperature of the first mold 100. In one exemplary embodiment, the predetermined temperature of the second mold 200 is from about 160° C to about 170° C. It will be appreciated that suitable molding temperatures will vary depending upon a number of parameters, such as the operating conditions and the type of thermoplastic rubber being used.

Page 17, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The second" with the following paragraph:

The second thermoplastic rubber material is injected into the second mold 200 so that it flows within the cavity formed by the first and second dies

202, 204. Because the backing layer 64 is softened, the heated, injected second thermoplastic rubber material may bond with the backing layer 64.

In one embodiment, the thermoplastic rubber material used in both the first and second molds 100, 200 is the same material. It will be appreciated that the thermoplastic rubber material used in the first and second molds 100, 200 may be different materials. After heating the materials in the second mold 200 for a sufficient time period, the molds 202, 204 are cooled causing the resultant outsole 40 to cool. After a sufficient cooling period, e.g., several minutes (i.e. 6 or more minutes), the first and second molds 202, 204 are opened and the outsole 40 is removed.

Page 17, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The outsole" with the following paragraph:

The outsole 40 preferably has the shaped fabric member 60 integrally formed as a part thereof due to the bonding between the backing layer 64 and the surrounding outsole 40. Preferably, the second mold 200 is configured so that the fabric sheet material 62 is not in contact with the second thermoplastic rubber that is injected into the second mold 200. In the shoe 10, the gap 63 separates the fabric sheet material 62 from the surrounding outer surface 42 of the outsole 40. In other words, the outsole 40 is formed around the shaped fabric member 60 so

that the ground contacting surface of the outsole 40 is formed of the fabric sheet material 62 and a portion of the outer surface 42 with both components being preferably generally planar with one another and exposed to contact the ground.

Page 21, please replace the paragraph beginning with "As best" with the following paragraph:

As best shown in Fig. 7, the shaped fabric member 340 is formed of a fabric sheet material 343 and a fabric backing layer 345. As will be described hereinafter, the backing layer 345 is preferably integrally bonded to the material forming the outsole 330 and preferably, the layer 345 and the outsole 330 are formed of the same material so that it will appear to the wearer that the fabric sheet material 343 is simply attached to a particular section of the outsole 330.

B 12
The backing layer 345 is the material lying immediately underneath the fabric sheet material 343 and serves to define a platform extending downwardly from the surrounding sections of the outsole 330. In this manner, the fabric sheet material 343 is only in contact with the backing layer 345 and not the surrounding sections of the outsole 330.

Page 22, please replace the paragraph beginning with "The manufacture" with the following paragraph:

The manufacture of the shoe 300 is preferably done in a similar or the same manner as the manufacture of the shoe 10 described in reference to Figs. 10-12. More specifically, the manufacture is preferably a two stage molding process using the first and second molds 100, 200. In this embodiment, the bonding between the backing layer 345 and the outsole 330 is clearly shown in the cross-sectional view of Fig. 7. After forming the shaped fabric member 340 using the first mold 100, the member 340 is then placed in the second mold 200 to form the outsole 330 illustrated in Figs. 5-7. During the second molding process, the fabric sheet material 342 is not in contact with the second thermoplastic rubber that is added to the second mold 200 to form the remaining sections of the outsole 330 but rather the second thermoplastic rubber is disposed over and around the heated fabric backing layer 344 (preferably a thermoplastic rubber also).